

The Makeup of Alaska's Population

2010 Census release includes race, age



Every spring following the decennial census, the U.S. Census Bureau releases its first set of figures — the redistricting file. These 2010 Census data provide a picture of the population in Alaska, broken out by voting age and race/ethnicity for all areas in the state.

The main purpose of these figures is the redistricting of electoral boundaries, so they are highly anticipated by the public and researchers alike. The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development also uses the census population figures to identify demographic trends, and as a base for estimates used in tax cap formulas and funding allocations.

Race

Starting with the 2000 Census, respondents could define themselves by one or more races. Although the 2010 Census is only the second to offer multi-race data, comparing the two gives a general picture of the racial trends in the state and the nation.¹ Exhibit 1 shows the racial makeup of the

¹Census information — including race and Hispanic origin — is self-reported, so these numbers simply reflect how Alaska residents identify themselves. Because the ways that people self-identify can change over time, it may not be reliable to compare multi-race data from 2010 to 2000.

state in 2010.

Nationwide, the proportion of the population that is “white alone” declined, while minority and multi-race shares rose.

Alaska's proportion of “Native alone” and “black alone” respondents decreased — and following the national trend, the state's “white alone” percentage also declined.

Unlike the U.S., the only races to increase their share of the whole in Alaska besides multi-race were “Asians alone” and “Pacific Islanders alone.”

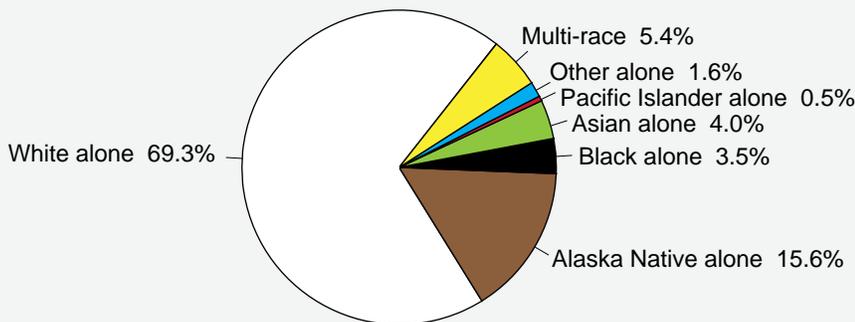
Among multi-race categories, the “Alaska Native alone and in combination²” and “black alone and in combination” respondents increased as a percentage of the state population. “Asian alone and in combination” and “Pacific Islander alone and in combination” have also gone up since the 2000 Census.

Because of geographic boundary differences (incorporations and annexations) between the 2000 and 2010 censuses, race data are comparable for only 27 boroughs and census areas. The proportion of “white alone” declined in 21 of these 27 boroughs/census areas, and all but three of them reported a rise in the proportion of multi-race residents.

The growth and decline in the “Alaska Native alone” category was scattered throughout the state, with the largest increase in Anchorage and the biggest loss

²When respondents define themselves by two or more races, they are counted in each racial category they report. In this example, those who reported that they are Alaska Native, all or in part, are counted as Alaska Natives whether it's just a small part of their racial makeup or they consider themselves solely Alaska Native.

1 Alaska's Racial Makeup 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

2 Population by Race/Ethnicity and Population Density

Alaska boroughs and census areas, 2010

Area	2010 Census population	White alone	Native alone	Black alone	Asian alone	Pacific Islander alone	Other alone	Multi-race (2+)	Hispanic/Latino	People per sq. mile
Aleutians East Borough	3,141	21%	28%	7%	36%	1%	3%	5%	12%	0.45
Aleutians West Census Area	5,561	36%	15%	6%	29%	2%	6%	6%	13%	1.27
Anchorage, Municipality of	291,826	66%	8%	6%	8%	2%	2%	8%	8%	171.19
Bethel Census Area	17,013	11%	83%	0%	1%	0%	0%	4%	1%	0.42
Bristol Bay Borough	997	48%	34%	0%	1%	0%	0%	17%	2%	1.98
Denali Borough	1,826	90%	4%	1%	1%	0%	1%	4%	2%	0.14
Dillingham Census Area	4,847	18%	72%	0%	1%	0%	0%	9%	2%	0.26
Fairbanks North Star Borough	97,581	77%	7%	5%	3%	0%	1%	7%	6%	13.30
Haines Borough	2,508	83%	9%	0%	1%	0%	1%	6%	2%	1.08
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	2,150	47%	41%	0%	1%	0%	0%	10%	4%	0.29
Juneau, City and Borough of	31,275	70%	12%	1%	6%	1%	1%	9%	5%	11.58
Kenai Peninsula Borough	55,400	85%	7%	0%	1%	0%	1%	6%	3%	3.45
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	13,477	68%	14%	1%	7%	0%	1%	9%	4%	2.77
Kodiak Island Borough	13,592	55%	13%	1%	20%	1%	3%	8%	7%	2.08
Lake and Peninsula Borough	1,631	23%	65%	1%	0%	0%	0%	10%	3%	0.07
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	88,995	85%	6%	1%	1%	0%	1%	6%	4%	3.62
Nome Census Area	9,492	16%	76%	0%	1%	0%	0%	6%	1%	0.41
North Slope Borough*	9,430	33%	54%	1%	5%	1%	1%	5%	3%	0.11
Northwest Arctic Borough	7,523	11%	81%	0%	1%	0%	0%	6%	1%	0.21
Petersburg Census Area	3,815	71%	16%	0%	3%	0%	1%	9%	3%	1.16
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	5,559	50%	40%	0%	0%	0%	0%	9%	2%	1.42
Sitka, City and Borough of	8,881	65%	17%	1%	6%	0%	1%	10%	5%	3.09
Skagway, Municipality of	968	91%	4%	0%	1%	0%	0%	4%	2%	2.14
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	7,029	80%	11%	1%	1%	0%	1%	5%	3%	0.28
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	9,636	74%	14%	0%	4%	1%	0%	7%	4%	0.28
Wade Hampton Census Area	7,459	3%	95%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0.44
Wrangell, City and Borough of	2,369	73%	16%	0%	1%	0%	0%	9%	2%	0.93
Yakutat, City and Borough of	662	42%	36%	0%	4%	2%	0%	15%	3%	0.09
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	5,588	22%	71%	0%	0%	0%	0%	6%	1%	0.04

*Data include the group quarters population in Prudhoe Bay in the North Slope Borough, a population that is largely white. The U.S. Census Bureau used the group quarters questionnaire, which includes the question, "Where do you spend most of your time?" If the respondent wrote a city and state without the required physical address, the respondent was counted at the group quarters facility. The department is evaluating how to address this issue in future estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

in the western boroughs and census areas. The Northern and Gulf Coast regions of Alaska have, and have always had, high proportions of Alaska Natives. (See Exhibits 2 and 3.) Higher fertility rates among Alaska Natives make up for much of the population losses due to net out-migration (more people moving out than in) in these regions, and generally result in a lower median age.

In the majority of boroughs, the "Alaska Native alone" population declined as a proportion of the total between 2000 and 2010. The biggest drops were in the North Slope and Bristol Bay boroughs, with declines of more than 10 percent-

age points each. However, when excluding the Prudhoe Bay group quarters³ population, which is mainly white, the "Alaska Native alone" share of the North Slope Borough's population only

³Group quarters are places where people live or stay in a group living arrangement owned or managed by an entity or organization that provides housing and/or services for its residents. Examples include college residence halls, residential treatment centers, prisons, skilled nursing facilities, group homes, military barracks, and workers' dormitories.

Because Prudhoe Bay is composed solely of workers who live on site, the U.S. Census Bureau counted the population in 2010 using the group quarters questionnaire. In addition to the basic census questions, they asked, "Where do you spend most of your time?" If the respondent wrote a city and state without the required physical address, the respondent was counted at the group quarters facility. The Department of Labor is evaluating how to address this issue in future estimates.

3 Proportion Alaska Native

Alaska boroughs and census areas, 2010



*Data exclude the largely white group quarters population in Prudhoe Bay in the North Slope Borough. The U.S. Census Bureau used the group quarters questionnaire, which includes the question, “Where do you spend most of your time?” If the respondent wrote a city and state without the required physical address, the respondent was counted at the group quarters facility. The department is evaluating how to address this issue in future estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

declined by a half a percentage point.

Places with larger populations tended to have lower proportions of “Alaska Native alone” residents. Places with more than 10,000 residents were only 8 percent Alaska Native, while places with less than 2,500 were over 40 percent Alaska Native.

Hispanic origin

Hispanic or Latino populations are reported as an ethnic group in the 2000 and 2010 censuses. “Hispanic” is not classified in the race category because people of Hispanic origin can be of any race. Following national trends, the percentage of Alaska’s population that is Hispanic increased from 2000 to 2010.

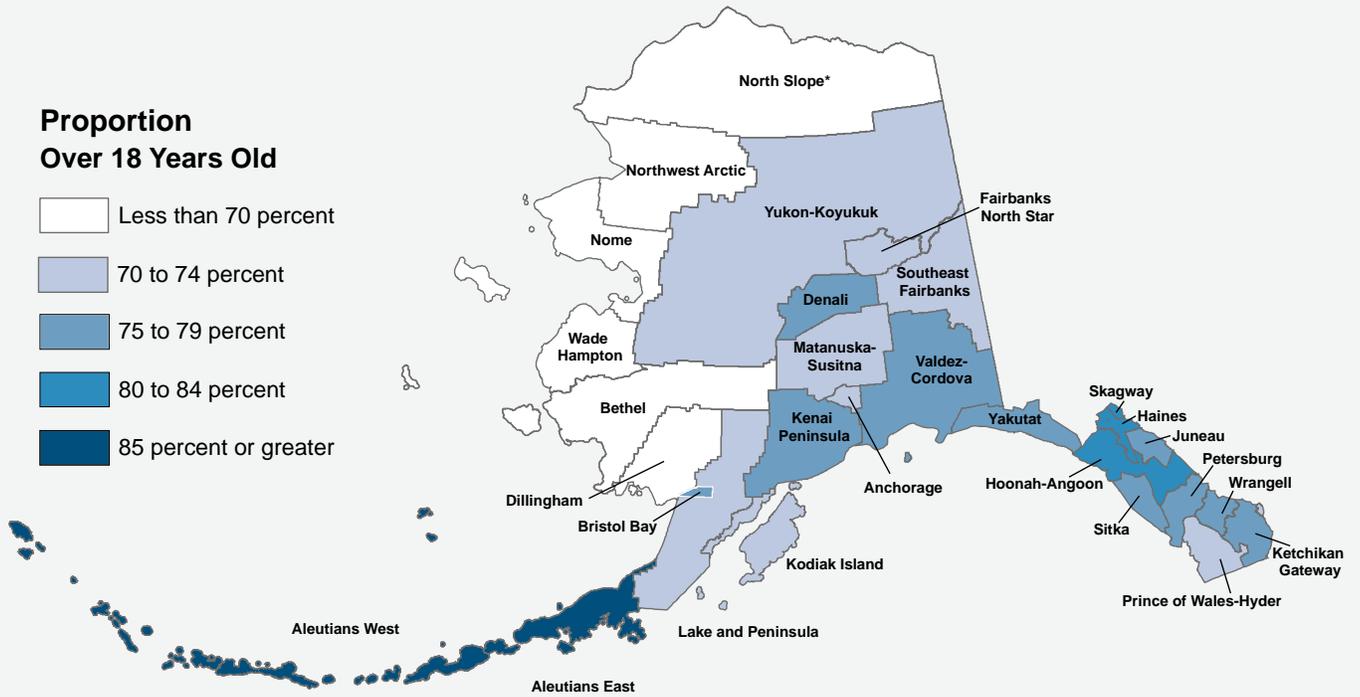
As with other population characteristics, there are significant differences in ethnic composition across the state. The boroughs and census areas with the

greatest and smallest percentages of Hispanics were the Aleutians West and Wade Hampton census areas, respectively. Aleutians West Census Area changed the most proportionally, with Hispanics increasing by more than two percentage points from 2000 to 2010.

The Hispanic share only decreased in four boroughs or census areas: Aleutians East Borough, Denali Borough, Dillingham Census Area, and Wade Hampton Census Area. Overall, the majority of Hispanic population growth was in the Municipality of Anchorage, Matanuska-Susitna Borough, and Fairbanks North Star Borough.

Hispanic populations across the state ranged from 0 to 21 percent, with higher percentages of Hispanics in the more populous cities and census designated places. Other places with Hispanic population percentages in the double-digits were Fort Greely CDP, King Cove, Kodiak Station CDP, and Unalaska.

Proportion Over Age 18 4 Alaska boroughs and census areas, 2010



*Data exclude the quarters population in Prudhoe Bay in the North Slope Borough. The U.S. Census Bureau used the group quarters questionnaire, which includes the question, "Where do you spend most of your time?" If the respondent wrote a city and state without the required physical address, the respondent was counted at the group quarters facility. The department is evaluating how to address this issue in future estimates.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

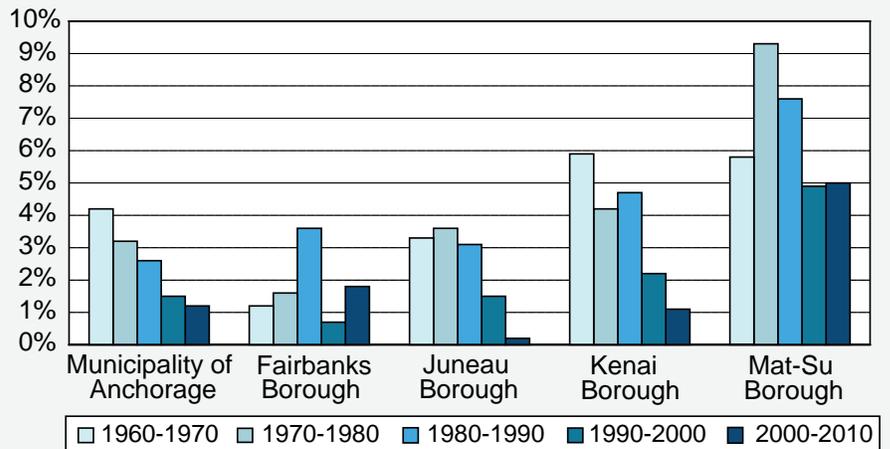
Age

The initial release of census data covers the population as a whole as well as those ages 18 and over. The purpose of breaking out the data this way is to identify the voting-age population for redistricting.

Social and economic factors can influence the age structure of an area. Areas with higher percentages of adults in 2010 include the Aleutians (with its large fish processing industry), and Southeast Region (with an aging population).

Areas with lower proportions of adults tend to have higher fertility rates and a higher proportion of Alaska Natives. These include Northern Region and the majority of Southwest Region. Exhibits 3 and 4 show these trends.

5 Growth Trends of Most Populous Boroughs Alaska, 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

6 Population by Size of Place Alaska, 2000 and 2010

	April 1, 2010			April 1, 2000			Population change 2000-2010	Change in % of total 2000-2010
	Number of places	Census	Percent of state total	Number of places	Census	Percent of state total		
Alaska	372	710,231	100.0%	353	626,931	100.0%	83,300	0.0%
Places of 2,500+	37	573,387	80.7%	31	463,365	73.9%	110,022	6.8%
50,000+	1	291,826	41.1%	1	260,283	41.5%	31,543	-0.4%
10,000-49,999	6	122,921	17.3%	3	72,337	11.5%	50,584	5.8%
5,000-9,999	15	102,565	14.4%	10	65,974	10.5%	36,591	3.9%
2,500-4,999	15	56,075	7.9%	17	64,771	10.3%	-8,696	-2.4%
Places less than 2,500	335	122,659	17.3%	322	117,524	18.7%	5,135	-1.4%
1,000-2,499	29	48,063	6.8%	26	41,618	6.6%	6,445	0.2%
500-999	53	36,707	5.2%	53	36,306	5.8%	401	-0.6%
250-499	59	21,326	3.0%	58	21,018	3.4%	308	-0.4%
100-249	68	11,323	1.6%	89	14,044	2.2%	-2,721	-0.6%
Under 100	126	5,240	0.7%	96	4,538	0.7%	702	0.0%
Outside areas		14,185	2.0%		46,042	7.3%	-31,857	-5.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census; Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

The proportion of the population over age 18 in places with more than 500 residents ranges from a low of 53 percent in Fox River to a high of 100 percent in Prudhoe Bay.

Growth in Alaska

Alaska grew overall from 2000 to 2010, however, rates varied across regions. All regions' populations increased in the last decade except Southeast, which declined due to net out-migration and low fertility rates.

The Anchorage/Mat-Su region grew the most between 2000 and 2010, with strong rates of in-migration and natural increase (births minus deaths).

The five most populous boroughs in the state continued to grow in the last decade; however, only Fairbanks and Mat-Su grew at a faster rate than the decade before. Juneau's rate of growth was the lowest, while Mat-Su's remained the highest. (See Exhibit 5.)

The population sizes of places have changed significantly since 2000. As in the past, there is a rural-to-urban migration trend in Alaska. More places than ever have more than 2,500 residents, and the number of places with populations of more than 10,000 has almost doubled since 2000.

Although Alaska's overall population density is low, over 80 percent live in places with 2,500 people or more. Just 2 percent live outside of cities and census designated places, and these populations as a share of the total continue to decrease. (See Exhibit 6.)

The populations of places with more than 2,500 residents also increased faster as a share of the total from 2000 to 2010 than from 1990 to 2000. The populations of places with less than 2,500 residents decreased as a share of the total during the 2000s, contrasted with an increase in sparsely populated places in the 1990s.